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ABSTRACT

This document presents three articles concerned with the Christian college. The articles include the idea of a college, responsibility for a Christian teacher, and scholarship and the rule of Christian faith. (MJM)

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The Christian College: Some Thoughts and Reflections

W. Frank Hull IV, editor

The Center for the Study of Higher Education

The University of Toledo

March, 1974

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WFH

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Introduction

The "Christian College," a strange term today, is indeed an oddity. What does it mean? How does it differ from any other of the legion of institutions calling themselves a "college?" Is it merely another "invisible college" or is it essentially different in this day when most institutions are scrambling, through their admissions teams, to be unique? The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in its (at last count) twenty-one "reports," sixty-four "sponsored studies," nineteen "technical reports," and thirty-one "reprints," devoted but one piece to a topic that could include the "Christian College." I refer, to be sure, to Professor C. Robert Pace's *Education and Evangelism: A Profile of Protestant Colleges.*[1] But this work does not adequately treat either "ecclesiastical history" in this country or the "Christian College." "Church association" does not indicate if an institution is a "Christian College."

Specifically, the "Christian College" is an institution of higher education where the administration, faculty, and often a vocal portion of the student body and staff are united in a vision of the reality of the person of Jesus Christ in our day. Their real sense of community is often explicitly centered on this vision. And, probably most important, the vision makes a major difference in the way they conduct their lives.

At these institutions, striving for scholarship, as well as excellence in all endeavors, is related to a realization that these individuals are a minority. This minority is committed to a mission of making the vision an option to be shared by us all. Consequently, there is a personal concern not only for the student's intellectual faculties and personal development but also for his spiritual growth.

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1. C. Robert Pace, *Education and Evangelism: A Profile of Protestant Colleges;* sponsored by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972).

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The "Christian College," in short, is a valid and important entity for all in higher education to study and hopefully to understand. In this day when many question how we might unify our "objectives" (educational and other), the "Christian College" provides a viable example. Many of us in various institutions are now beginning to talk of "value education" and its absence in our curricula. Here the "Christian College" furnishes an example of an institution which not only takes "value education" seriously but goes beyond to implement consciously a value system. What is the function of the milieu as it contributes to an undergraduate's education? What are the lessons to be learned from institutions in which every faculty member and administrator is expected and encouraged to exhibit the institution's philosophical and theological aims by a personal response to each student? Such a situation seems too good in our world of higher educational diversity, which often approaches confusion. To be sure, there are existential "moments of conflict;" yet these institutions have remained amazingly unified over the years. Why?

In fact, we know very little about the "Christian College"—a bias we cannot afford. Too much myth surrounds this type of institution. There is much to learn about this kind of college which, in many ways, is unique within the American system of higher education.

Thus, The Center for the Study of Higher Education was quite pleased to assist in facilitating arrangements whereby various faculty committed to the vision of the "Christian College" and a small number of representatives of various "Christian Colleges" could meet and talk together. Malone College, through its vice president for academic affairs, Richard Chambers, endeavored to make the Third Annual Cooperative Conference of the Center a successful and thought-provoking occasion. Dr. D. Elton Trueblood, formerly professor of philosophy at Earlham College and presently a fellow at the Yokefellow Institute, and Dr. David L.

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McKenna, president of Seattle Pacific College, shared their insights during formal presentations.

We at the Center are pleased to present you with the written form of the presentations of Professor Trueblood and President McKenna for your serious and careful consideration.

February, 1974

W. Frank Hull IV, Director
The Center for the Study of
Higher Education
The University of Toledo

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The Idea of a College — Revisited

D. Elton Trueblood

I would like to share with you my updated convictions about the "ideal" college. Some of you may know that when *The Idea of a College* came out in 1959 it already had something of a history. As early as 1949 I addressed the annual meetings of the American Association of Colleges on "The Idea of a College," which was printed as a single address. The ideas grew upon me, and I saw that the time had come to make a full book. I wanted to do something concerning the task that unites us to clarify our progress. And, of course, I was conscious of the famous title of Cardinal Newman, "The Idea of a University." I was concerned with a college.

I did not believe then, and I do not believe now, that an university is better than a college. A college is a special kind of fellowship, learning, teaching, and living together.

The biggest change that has come since I wrote the book in 1959 is the change in the public estimation of a college. "College" was then a good word. For many people now, it is a bad word. There are people who believe, with some justification, that some colleges represent more the disease than the cure. We ought to be honest enough to face that judgment. Certain colleges today have sexual permissiveness. There is cohabitation in the dormitories. There is active pushing of drugs. But people hate this, and well they might. If we pooh-pooh their reaction, we are missing the point badly. A college *can* decline.

There are many colleges today which once had an "evangelical" emphasis, but which have given this up and gone to the other extreme. Indeed, some of the most "secular" institutions today are those that had a Christian foundation, but they are ashamed of it and lean over backwards to deny it. I would say that as a speaker representing the Christian faith, I have had a better hearing at Ohio State University than I have had in many of the so-called "Christian colleges."

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Recently I went to a Christian college to speak at a convocation. When it was announced that there would be a meeting of the students who were concerned with the Christian cause, how many do you suppose there were? Four—out of 1200! The vision had disappeared. It is extremely important to know that there can be total erosion. In fact, there can be such erosion that sometimes an institution may have exactly the opposite impact of that which was originally intended. I know this: all institutions go down, unless there is conscious and concerted effort to maintain them. Erosion goes just one way. Once you have lost a standard, it is very hard to regain it.

Let us remember that the Christian college, far from being something odd, had been our main pattern. Up until the founding of the University of North Carolina, every college had been founded on Christian conviction. All of you know the names of the famous early ones—Harvard, William and Mary, Kings College, etc. Then a whole chain was forged across the nation, approaching the Pacific coast with Whittier, Occidental, Pomona, and so forth. Out of some of these schools came undoubted greatness. Think of the greatness that came at Yale many years ago under the presidency of the famous Timothy Dwight. The place became alive with both intellectual and spiritual vitality. I suppose that under Dwight, Yale was the most hopeful place of learning on this continent. But, it is now true that there are many more people in the state universities than in such institutions. When you add this to the fact that so many of these schools have revolted against the principles of their foundation, you understand that the group attempting to be committed "Christians" in higher education is a very small group, a minority. Yet for us to know we are a minority is itself a great thing—it avoids delusion and complacency.

Many people were shocked when I left Stanford University to go to Earlham. Some probably thought that I must have been crazy. Here was a great, famous university, and I was going to a little Christian college in Indiana, unknown to many. But I was convinced that greater excellence was possible this way. Already I was noticing that the worst decay

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was often occurring in the largest places and, of course, since then that observation has been verified—where they have had months and months with no education at all: California, Columbia, Harvard. When I was at Mount Holyoke College as a visiting professor, we brought in an English philosopher who was teaching at Harvard, and he shocked everybody by saying that his Harvard students were the poorest students he had ever had in his life. And if ever I needed anything to verify my sense that bigness and greatness are not identical, this helped to do so.

Tom Jones and I put our minds together and we had a great time trying to build something at Earlham, and, of course, it is a joy that I can never forget. Tom saw that he could not possibly do it alone, and his main effort was to build up a genuine team—just the opposite of people who are power hungry and struggling against each other. Tom's team tried to supplement one another, not looking so much at one another as looking together in the same direction. He gave me—though I held no administrative post and was Professor of Philosophy — complete freedom to watch for such people and bring them to Earlham. And so, after I left Stanford and before settling at Earlham, I sailed in April, 1946, to Europe with a Friends ambulance unit. On ship about midway between New York and South Hampton, I met a man who introduced himself. He was Landrum Bolling. He had been a Professor of Political Science at Beloit and was going to Berlin with the overseas news agency for a couple of years. One of the first things he asked me was why I was interested in a little Christian college, and, of course, I told him. Right away he said, "Perhaps I am, too." During those days on shipboard we united our dream. I saw him later at Oxford, and from there I wrote to Tom Jones who was still at Fiske University in Nashville. I said, "Tom, I found a man." You do not do that very often. Tom believed me, wrote to Bolling in Berlin, and invited him to come and teach political science at Earlham. Two years later he arrived, was professor for two years, then general secretary, then president. In June of this year he resigned to become executive vice president of Lilly Endowment. That combination of Tom Jones and Landrum Bolling has been a wonderful event in my life.

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I knew what it was to be a part of a team guided by a man of vision. Often in that team we used a phrase of Alfred North Whitehead, who was my friend. "Moral education is impossible apart from the habitual vision of greatness." I believe in the Christian college because I think it has a better chance than any other to implement this vision. And above all, there is the tremendous asset of having at the center of the operation the person of Jesus Christ Himself, the Supreme Vision of greatness. Thomas Aquinas said more than 500 years ago, "Meditate upon His life and thou wilt know how far thou art from His perfection." Unfortunately, there are many universities and colleges where it is not really possible to offer a course on the life of Christ. It would not be permissible. Some would think — mistakenly — that such a course is antagonistic to the intent of the State Court ruling. They are not free to have this kind of moving and elevating experience.

Recently, at compulsory chapel services at a Christian college, I saw a great thing: the meeting of many minds at once and the coming together of a fellowship of all of them. And I knew that I had been in scores of institutions where that simply was not possible. Some of them say it could not be done legally. Most of them say it could not be done because the people do not believe in it, and the faculty would undercut it. I see that the Christian college has a far greater degree of freedom in trying to elevate the vision of greatness than most of the institutions that I know. I want you to realize that what Christian colleges represent is not something second rate or third rate, some poor little replica of the excellent, but, rather, the best.

In my early years as a student, I was influenced by a number of remarkable men, and one of the most remarkable of these was Wendell Harris. Wendell Harris belonged to that first great faculty at Johns Hopkins University in the 80's and early 90's, when Baltimore was the most exciting and intellectual place in North America. I knew him on two occasions in England. First, I knew him when I was a student at Woodbrook in England in 1924. Then I saw him at the end

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of May, 1939, a few weeks before the opening of the second World War. He was nearly blind and very sweet and lovely and he called me "my boy." We talked of his life and his vision. I said, "Professor Harris, what was the secret of that amazing burst of intellect at the Hopkins?" "Why," he said, "it was very simple. We all attended each other's lectures. Everybody did everything. When you lectured on Semitic documents, you could have the entire university including all of your fellow professors. They had a sense of wholeness, of being members of one another. Would not it raise your sights if you had Professor Gildersleeve and others like him in the audience?" I quite agreed. They could do that then.

A Christian college is the one place today where this is more likely to be possible than in any other kind of college. But if you do not do this, in what sense is it a college? If there is not a time when all are together but simply fragmented into little groups here and little groups there, and departments here and classes there, then the word "collegial" is a misnomer. It is a fragmented set of cliques, not a college at all.

I have great hope in the committed unashamedly "Christian" college as being a college in which the sense of being a genuine academic community can be recovered. Of course, you cannot do this without tremendous effort. You have many enemies, many difficulties. But when you have a great enough vision, you are not stopped by difficulties. There are difficulties in anything that you do. The question is, what are the difficulties if you do not do it? It is central to philosophic method to understand the principle of comparative evil. There the golden rule is: never give up a thing because it has difficulties, unless you know something else that has fewer.

I give you this vision of greatness. I found in coming to Earlham that we could do some things that we could never do at Stanford University. The very smallness helped make it possible. For example, I could know all of my colleagues. Also, I soon found it possible after every lecture on general

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philosophy to make it an absolute rule to never have two classes in a row, because I knew that what happened personally after the classes was very important. I would take seven or so students to my study every time, where I always had the coffee pot on. There we would talk more on the subject and more about their lives. By the end of the term they were my friends. These friendships have continued, and I meet these people wherever I go. It was more possible in a Christian college to see each one as a person than it was in a great and glittering place like Stanford. I loved Earlham because I thought I was joining something of intrinsic worth. I soon became convinced that not only is there a moral gain in this interest in persons, but that there can actually be an intellectual gain. The "Christian college" can be superior, even intellectually, if you keep the vision, help one another, and are unashamed of what your vision of excellence is.

Remember our golden text: "Moral education is impossible apart from the habitual vision of greatness."

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Responsibility for a Christian Teacher

David L. McKenna

To teach is to be accountable. Much has been said and written about the personal and professional responsibilities of professors in higher education. These responsibilities are "givens" for the Christian teacher. But over and above the obligations that are shared with the collegial communit , a Christian teacher has commitments which arise from the theological assumptions supporting Christian scholarship. It is these responsibilities that endow Christian teaching with the note of transcendence that is inherent in Samuel Gould's call for teaching with a "touch of immortality."

I

Revelational Integration

Because truth is a unity, a Christian teacher has the responsibility to give teaching *revelational integration.* Learning may be visually conceived as a cone standing on a broad base and rising to its apex. At the base of the cone are the broad fields of human knowledge, defined in facts, concepts and precepts. No curriculum is pansophic in its content. Faculties and teachers must make selective value decisions about the content that will be covered in a college career or course. Traditionally, the base of the cone has been described as the "general education" core of the curriculum or the introductory courses in major sequence. Not enough stress can be given to the need for "substance" in the educational experience of students, particularly in an age of feeling when the "guts" of emotion are competing with the "grit" of cognition in the total learning experience. Christian higher education, in particular, must renew its dedication to the substance of knowledge because of the anti-intellectualism that is part of our history and continues to surface in contemporary religious movements.

A Christian teacher's responsibility begins with the

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transmission of representative knowledge at the base of the cone. But, if the teacher's function is limited to factual transmission, a sign should be placed over the door of the faculty office which reads, "Remember—You Can Be Replaced." Educational technology will undoubtedly assume many of the elementary teaching functions at the base of the pyramid as sophisticated machines become the extension of the human brain.

Purveyors of knowledge are also condemning their students to early obsolescence. A more honest approach to teaching was taken by a professor who met his last class before retirement. He closed the hour by saying, "I have two confessions to make to you as I leave teaching. First, half of what I've taught you will be untrue in ten years. Second, I have no idea which half it will be."

To add to the dilemma of the teacher of fact, Richard Harris has said that students today are troubled and confused by "informational overload." Like the bombardment of options created by novelty, impermanence and variety in Toffler's *Future Shock*, students have "knowledge shock" which can create its own special brand of academic fatigue.

As a remedy for "knowledge shock," learning must rise from the base of the cone to the middle section, where substance is pulled together and moved toward meaning. Teaching is purposeful, and, in the middle section of the cone, its task is to develop relationships between the pieces of knowledge that have been identified at the base of the cone. Liberal education is designed to accomplish this goal. Through interdisciplinary studies, liberally-educated professors and supportive peer group learning, teaching should lead toward a knowledge network between and among the academic disciplines. A child put it so simply when she was asked to define education. Her answer was, "Education helps you tie together the things you see." Relational teaching is a responsibility of higher education that has been presumed, but not always assumed.

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In the apex of the cone, knowledge rises to its moral and ethical implications. Professors, both secular and Christian, dodge the responsibilities of the apex. Secularists truncate the cone by disclaiming moral commitments as nonobjective. Christians default by creating what Laurence T. Peter, in his book, *The Peter Principle* calls a "floating apex."[1] In management, executives whom you cannot fire or retire are made "floating apexes" with paper titles and honorary functions that are only casually related to the ongoing operation of the organization. A "floating apex" in Christian higher education is a commitment to revealed truth suspended without relationship to a topless cone of human learning. If secularists fear moral commitments in teaching, Christians may fear intellectual exposure on faith-learning questions when the apex is properly attached to the base of the cone.

While acknowledging that the philosophical, moral and ethical implications of teaching vary among disciplines, no teacher can plead immunity from this responsibility. With each new interlock among the disciplines, the weight of responsibility increases. For example, Norbert Wiener, in the book *God and Golem, Inc.*, refutes the idea that computers will strip man of his power to make decisions on his moral obligations. He says that computers can reduce to split-seconds the decision to launch nuclear missiles that may destroy the world. Man's brain cannot deliberate after he pushes the button because there is a point of no-return, even with a fail-safe system. In place of deliberation after-the-fact, Wiener says that ethical decision-making in the future will have to be before-the-fact. Evidently, nations and individuals will have to have ethical policies framed in advance of decisions that are turned over to a machine. A computer scientist may assume that his training has severely limited moral implications, yet, if learning rises to the apex, how can he avoid such a far-reaching moral question and its relationship to other disciplines?[2]

1. Laurence T. Peter and Raymond Hill, *The Peter Principle*, (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1969), p. 39.
2. Norbert Wiener, *God and Golem, Inc.*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1964).

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When the moral issues of knowledge are pursued, a teacher will encounter eternal questions at the point of the cone. "Who am I?", "Why am I here?" and "Where am I going?" are the questions that students are asking. Teaching at its highest level is a theological task. George Buttrick drove this point home when he said, "If good theology is not taught explicitly, bad theology will be taught implicitly."[3]

Christian teaching is moral teaching. When eternal truth is confronted, learning vibrates between exaltation and humiliation, exhilaration and despair, eternity and time. Professors who acknowledge the full authority of the Word of God measure the findings and conclusions of human knowledge against the revelation of the Scriptures. For this reason, a Christian teacher who is not a student of the Scriptures, whatever his field may be, has already sacrificed the possibility of making his teaching superlative rather than comparative.

A confrontation between faith and learning is not an open-and-shut case. There are areas of integration in which faith and learning are complementary strengths. In other instances, contradictions between faith and learning must be faced. On such occasions, a Christian teacher may have to declare the best of human knowledge wrong because the contradiction requires a choice. More often, however, such a contradiction will call out the scholarly quality of reserved judgment until further evidence has been gathered.

At times a Christian teacher will also admit what Bernard Ramm has called "imponderables" or disjunctures between faith and learning which escape all the methods of human inquiry and are not identified in the Scriptures. Huston Smith's "open mind," "confidence," and "fallibility" are the most active agents in this kind of faith-learning encounter.[4] Scholarly patience and Christian faith will become part-

3. George A. Buttrick, *Biblical Thought and the Secular University*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1960).

4. Huston Smith, "Objectivity vs. Commitment," *Colleges and Commitments*, Lloyd J. Averill and William W. Jellema, eds., (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971).

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ners at this moment when it is acknowledged that the answer will be sought, but possibly never known by piecemeal methods and finite minds.

Professors with a sense of responsibility for theological integration do not stop with "integration," "contradiction" or "imponderables" in the confrontation between faith and learning. In theoretical form, it is too much like the philosopher's abstraction or the scientist's pure research. Theologically integrative teaching must have an ethical outworking in the decision-making process of the student. An editorial in *Christianity Today* points out the vacuum in ethics that is now catching up with the Christian community. The editor states that we have been either relativistic or reactionary in our ethical posture. Then he recalls the work of Heuss who concluded that pagans were attracted to the early church, not alone by the Christian's love for one another, but also by the *clarity* of their beliefs and the *consistency* of their actions in the moral realm.[5] Ethical clarity and consistency should be products of an integrative learning experience in the "Christian college."

Effective teaching puts a premium upon "learning how to learn" rather than just accumulating knowledge. Christian teaching should produce the same result and add one of its own. "Learning how to make ethical decisions as a Christian" is more important than just accumulating ethical knowledge. Moral ambiguity and ethical uncertainty comprise one of the most realistic threats of the post-industrial age to the witness of the Christian faith. Responsibility for ethical learning rests on the doorstep of the Christian college because it involves handling new information, testing alternatives, and making defensible decisions. To me, this is where the battle will be the most fierce, but also where our weapons are the weakest. Christian faculties should delay their perennial plans for modifying the calendar or revising the curriculum long enough to ask themselves this life-and-death question:

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5. "Evangelical Ethics," *Christianity Today*, October 12, 1973, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 42-45.

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"How can we make ethical *clarity* and *consistency* one of the most important outcomes of learning in the Christian college?"

A Christian teacher, then, has the obligation to work with knowledge at three levels: (1) facts; (2) meaning; and (3) morals. To meet this obligation, the learning process will include: (a) analysis; (b) synthesis; and (c) confrontation. Either personally or communally, a Christian teacher must be a scholar, a philosopher, and a theologian. Although these goals are ideal, to strive for less is to miss the compelling and impassioned purpose of Christian higher education.

II

Creational Inquiry

Because truth can be known, Christian teachers have the responsibility to give learning the spirit of *creational inquiry*. When God instructed man to "name the animals," He made him a partner in creation. Primary creation, *ex nihilo*, is reserved for God alone. But the intellectual and intuitive powers which God gave to man when He created him in His own image opened his potential as a secondary creator—developing new forms out of existing matter, mind and spirit.

A Christian teacher who believes in the creative potential of students in an open universe will demonstrate this conviction in the teaching-learning process. Contrary to the opinion that Christian teaching is another form of preaching, the "live option" and the "open question" should characterize Christian teaching even more than secular teaching. If the Christian teacher is moving toward integration in the learning process, "live options" and "open questions" are a part of that proceeding. When integration is not a conscious goal, there is a tendency to limit teaching to the transmission, but not the discovery, of knowledge. Furthermore, "live options" and "open questions" suffer in the presence of "hidden prejudices." A known commitment invites inquiry, but "commitments by surprise" makes a shell game of a class discussion. While visiting a secular campus one day, I was invited by the

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dean to sit in on one of the classes of his best teacher. Students sat around in the sacred circle of the democratic classroom and the turtle-necked professor assumed the Guru's squat on a table. Coincidentally, Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* was the topic of the day. Discussion started with the open question, "What do you think the scarlet A around Hester's neck meant?" No answer. Then, sarcastically, he asked, "Don't you read the Bible?" The class responded as if someone had held up a "snicker here" sign for a puppet audience at a quiz show. Stimulated by this response, the professor went on, "Haven't you ever heard of the Beatitudes —or better called 'platitudes'?" By this time, the "hidden prejudice" of the teacher had closed the open question and canceled the Scriptures as a live option.

Intellectual integrity is a quality that a Christian teacher shares with any honest scholar. His integrity, however, has the added dimension of a confidence in revealed truth, a conscience guided by the Holy Spirit, and an awareness that the final judgment will include intellectual as well as spiritual honesty.

What, then, is the difference between the open inquiry of the secular scholar and the creational inquiry of the Christian? Inquiry in a Christian context has been described as: (a) an issue arising out of *ultimate concern;* (b) an expression of *honest doubt* about standard answers; and (c) a more unified commitment to *ultimate truth.* A *sense of the ultimate* makes the difference. While a Christian scholar creates a learning climate in which open inquiry is invited, he also brings a creational perspective to teaching which gives him the prerogatives of a partnership in creation without usurping the ultimacy of the Creator. He recognizes that the creative process is not an end in itself, but must lead to the evaluative judgment, "It is good." Creative inquiry, therefore, saves the Christian teacher from the arrogance of the scholar who assumes that he himself is the creator, as well as from the idolatry of a method which presumes to have a corner on truth.

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III

Divine Vocation

Because man has a will to know, a Christian teacher has a responsibility to consider teaching a *divine vocation.* Great teachers have always conveyed the conviction they were "called" to teach. Historically, their "calling" may have arisen as teaching became one of the "substitute services" for those who did not go into the ministry. Or perhaps, the sense of mission sprang from the millennial hopes that we have held for the educational process. Whatever the case may be, a Christian teacher retains the "calling" to the ministry of teaching as a divine vocation.

Elton Trueblood talks about divine vocation in a triple framework: (a) God has a plan; (b) men are chosen to fulfill His plan; and (c) special tasks are given to individuals and institutions to work the plan. A Christian teacher is distinguished from his secular colleagues by his relationship to God and the plan of God as the basis for his specialized teaching task. Although he may not be ecclesiastically ordained, he is a minister—called, anointed, prepared and placed.[6]

One of the running debates in Christian higher education is whether or not full-time faculty members should be committed Christians. If a sense of divine vocation is a requirement for Christian teaching, the question is moot. Divine vocation goes hand in hand with the basic assumptions about the nature of truth and the nature of man. Faith cannot be integrated with knowledge unless an individual has a working understanding of both worlds. In knowledge, this means scholarly preparation; in faith, it means personal commitment. Likewise, in the struggles of students to achieve personal integration in a Christian college, it is difficult to conceive of an effective teacher who has not himself confronted

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6. Elton Trueblood, *The Future of the Christian,* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 96.

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the claims of Christ and their implications for intellectual as well as personal and social wholeness.

In the recruitment of faculty, an administrator in a Christian college is obligated to ask direct questions about the candidate's sense of divine vocation. For instance, I do not hesitate to state the institution's commitment and ask the candidate if he or she shares it personally. Then, I will follow with a question that poses a faith-learning problem in the individual's discipline to see if there is a sensitivity to these issues. Finally, I will set up a hypothetical student-faculty session in which the student presents a personal dilemma involving his faith and learning to see how the prospective faculty member will respond. Exact and easy answers are probably as suspect as blank stares and blubbering confusion; but the questions do give clues to a person's commitment and potential for growth.

From a practical standpoint, sharp lines can be drawn on the issue of whether or not teachers should be Christians in a Christian college. Begin with the assumption that the faculty is the most valuable resource in a Christian college. Follow this line of thought to the time of the tenure decision. An institution must make a quarter to a half million dollar investment in a person for a 25 to 30 year period. The question, then, is whether or not the mission of the institution can be personalized in the individual to whom you will make a lifetime commitment. Sobering thoughts hover over the future of Christian colleges when tenure decisions are extended out into the future. Every tenure decision should carry the weight of history with it. Tenure for mediocre Christian teachers cannot be justified any more than tenure for superior non-Christians. Certainly the decision should not be based on longevity alone. Cold facts and fiery experience show that, unless a faculty member has a sense of divine vocation, his stake in the college and its mission will be shallow. When the predictions of the future of the Christian college bode no better than a life-and-death destiny, only those teachers who have been called to the divine vocation of teaching will be counted when survival issues are drawn.

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IV

Sacramental Meaning

Because time has a purpose, a Christian teacher has the responsibility to give teaching a *sacramental meaning*. A paradox of the Christian faith is that a sacrament symbolizes life in the midst of death. Teaching has a similar character. It is questioning, doubtful, critical and skeptical. Yet, in its highest form, it is not cynical, nihilistic or absurd. Christian teaching is a paradox—it is life-affirming, hopeful and optimistic despite its sober appraisal of the nature of man and the future of the world.

Secular teaching begins with an optimistic view of man and ends with the pessimism of a treadmill. Christian teaching starts with a pessimism about man and ends with the optimism of a meaningful destiny. One of the characteristics which Bernard Ramm found in the earliest history of the Christian academy was the grandeur with which the faculties held the Christian revelation. To the early scholars, revelation was enthusiastically the "good news." Their teaching and their lives reflected this conviction. Today, however, there is the tendency to equate intellectuality with cynicism, even in Christian colleges. Unless everything is being questioned, particularly in the field of faith, one is not truly intellectual. A comparative survey of religion classes in church-related and secular colleges highlighted this fact. Church-related colleges tended to claim that their religion courses were "value-free," while secular institutions were less apologetic about the teaching of religious values. Rather than being sacramental or life-affirming, courses in religion and ethics in Christian colleges tended to be defensive, apologetic and diluted.

A Christian teacher has a duty to view teaching as sacramental or life-affirming. References to the Christian revelation will be hope-filled rather than apologetic. Relationships between man and knowledge will be positive rather than neg-

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ative. The future will be filled with God's grace rather than man's futility.

When Lewis Mayhew visited the campus of Seattle Pacific College and read our statement of educational philosophy and our educational commitment, he said, "If you are what you say you are, this campus should be characterized by a sense of joy." He saw the sacramental function of our mission that we had missed. Consequently, we began to rethink our purpose as a celebration of the Christian revelation and of the hope of man. A redemptive note was revised as the symbol of our college and our teaching.

Sacramental teaching came to life for me in the Hebrew museum in Jerusalem one day a few years ago. About thirty-five third-graders were huddled around a plaster of paris model of the Masada, the ancient fortress which the Jews defended against the Romans in the first century. As the Hebrew children inspected the model, the teacher told them the story of the nine hundred Jews who committed suicide rather than surrender to the Romans. Then she said, "These were your forefathers." Her flashing eye-language spoke eloquently, "Remember whose children you are — heirs of the Masada."

I thought, "If only we could convey that meaning to students in the Christian college through our teaching!" Against the backdrop of our history, our mission, and our destiny, we need to flash the signal to our students, "Remember whose sons you are."

Phillips described the *sacramental process* of which a Christian teacher is a part, when he translated Romans 8:19 as, "The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own." Then, in II Timothy 3:17, the *sacramental product* is defined as "The man of God . . . thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (KJV) Like the sculptor with clay, a Christian teacher personally fashions meaning into both the process and the product of the learning experience.

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V

Doctrinal Authority

Because truth is both natural and supernatural, a Christian teacher has the responsibility to teach with *doctrinal authority*. "Doctrine" is a misinterpreted word. It conjures up images of dogmatism and indoctrination. This is not necessarily true. "Doctrine" is the applied truth that is revealed at the intersection between natural and supernatural worlds or between the temporal and the eternal perspective. Cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith include Creation, Revelation, Incarnation, Resurrection, the Holy Spirit, and the Second Coming. Whether these doctrines are taught dogmatically or imposed by indoctrination depends upon a teacher's view of the freedom of man and the nature of the learning process. By its own nature, doctrine refutes dogmatism. God might have imposed eternal truth upon the temporal world, but He chose to risk the meaning of truth against the resistance of matter, the freedom of man, and the reality of evil. He preferred to teach rather than to command. Each doctrine, then, becomes an example of the role of truth, risk and commitment in the teaching-learning process on God's part.

Christian doctrine should lead to a Christian mind. Blamires, in his book, *The Christian Mind*, contends that the Christian mind no longer exists. He says, "There is still, of course, a Christian ethic, a Christian practice, and a Christian spirituality . . . but as a *thinking* being, the modern Christian has succumbed to secularization."[7] To resuscitate the Christian mind, Blamires calls for the cultivation of a supernatural orientation, an awareness of evil, a concept of truth, an acceptance of authority, a concern for persons, and a sacramental cast of life. The "concept of truth" of which he speaks is doctrinal in nature. Blamires fears that

> the violence of the collision between the secular mind and the Christian is often underestimated.

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7. Harry Blamires, *The Christian Mind*, (London: SPCK, 1963), p. 3.

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> Lines for the clash are clearly drawn because secularism asserts the opinionated self as the only judge of truth. Christianity imposes the given divine revalation as the final touchstone of truth.[8]

He goes on:

> The marks of truth as Christianly conceived, then, are that it is supernaturally grounded, not developed within nature; that it is objective and not subjective; that it is revelation and not construction; that it is discovered by inquiry and not elected by a majority vote; that it is authoritative and not a matter of personal choice.[9]

A Christian teacher will cultivate a Christian mind which recognizes the creative intention between an eternal and temporal perspective, understands the role of God and man in the process, and accepts a doctrinal truth which is the outcome. Without forfeiting the value of the learning process, a Christian teacher will arrive at the corollary characteristic of the Christian's mind — the acceptance of authority. As Blamires says, "Reason allows no place for a casual, one-man-to-another approach to God and His demands. It is either the bowed head or the turned back."[10]

VI

Incarnational Concern

Because man needs to be redeemed, a Christian teacher has a responsibility for an *incarnational concern* in teaching. In 1958, the well-known Jacobs study on values in higher education, showed that most of the factors on which we count heavily to change student's behavior, such as courses of study and methods of teaching, made little difference in value change. Certain professors, however, had a marked impact upon their students. Their teaching was characterized by: (a) high, clear and consistent expectations; (b) a humanistic

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 132.

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concern for their students; (c) involvement of the students in planning their learning; and (d) personalization of the teacher's value commitments as a part of the learning process.[11]

Among these qualities, a humanistic concern for the students and a value-charged teaching method stand out. Impact teachers, whether Christian or secular, will be separated from the professional masses by these characteristics. But a Christian teacher has a further distinction. Humanistic concern is raised to the level of incarnation. When "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . ." (John 1:14 KJV), God entered human existence. He revealed Himself incarnate through the man Jesus. Now, incarnation continues as God is shown through redeemed men who share the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In the manner of their life, they are still introducing God to the world. To them God has entrusted His plan for the redemption of the world. As Carl F. H. Henry said, "God is history's highest bidder. He staked everything on the incarnation, the resurrection, and a small band of fishermen."

A Christian teacher is in the succession of the "small band of fishermen." As an incarnational model, God's gamble with humanity is repeated. Students are seen, not as what they are, but as what they become — creative minds, whole persons, and the sons of God. Incarnational concern, exemplified by sacrificial love, a common commitment, and equal membership in the Body of Christ raises the teacher-student relationship to its full Christian dimension.

Caution needs to be taken against overstating the case for the Christian teacher as an incarnational model. Academic expectations are not sacrificed on the altar of sentimentality. Christian teachers will not have the same impact upon every student. Incarnational concern costs too much. A Christian teacher can only create an incarnational climate, one in which a personal concern, a value commitment, and a

11. Philip E. Jacob, *Changing Values in College*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1957).

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readiness to respond are communicated. Within this climate, some relationships will develop in which the Christian teacher will become a "significant other" for a few students. Others will remember the concern, the commitment, and the openness even though they never meet with the professor personally. Still others will totally miss the meaning of the climate. In these cases, a Christian teacher has the humility to believe that another teacher or another setting will provide the incarnational concern to which those students will respond. Success or failure, however, is not the criterion to judge the incarnational concern. As an extension of his divine vocation, a Christian teacher has only the responsibility to personalize the meaning of the Scripture, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . . . " (John 1:14 KJV)

VII

Eternal Perspective

Because the mind of man needs to be renewed, a Christian teacher has a responsibility to give teaching an *eternal perspective*. Jesus anticipated the renewing of the mind when He said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32 KJV) As an implied principle for Christian teaching, Jesus was saying that "the higher the truth the greater the freedom." Applied to Buttrick's levels of truth and mind, it means that the eternal perspective of the "self-transcendent" mind has the greatest freedom. Conversely, the "analytical" mind would be least free. In between are the levels of reflective, universal, mutual, subconscious and the "mind of dread," which have their own relative degrees of truth and freedom.

A Christian teacher is an advocate, not an antagonist of intellectual freedom. He is a protector of the rights of the scholar to pursue truth wherever it may lead. But his motivation for freedom does not arise from the false assumption that scholarly pursuits are carried on in a value-free climate. His eternal perspective opens up the possibility of full and free exploration of all other levels of mind. According to Rob-

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ert Frost's interpretation of Jesus' words, knowledge of the higher truth frees us from baser desires. Each new level of mind, then, frees us from the limitations of the lower levels. But one cannot claim the freedom of the higher levels of truth until truth at that level is known and its authority accepted. Because a Christian teacher claims and accepts revealed truth at the level of the "self-transcendent mind," he should have freedom at all other levels of mind. Even the subconscious mind and the "mind of dread" are renewed by the truth of an eternal perspective. A Christian teacher has the responsibility to demonstrate the commitment and the freedom of the transformed mind as a part of the teaching process.

In practice, Christian teachers have failed to take the initiative for freedom at the various levels of mind. Rather than providing a responsible point of reference for intellectual freedom, Christian teachers have spent their time defending their claims to membership in the scholarly community. Likewise, rather than taking leadership in developing the meaning of freedom at each level of the mind, Christian teachers have forfeited the field to secular scholars. An example is the reflective or intuitive level of mind. In a study of campus climates, Chickering compared the conservative Christian college to a tilted billiard table. Entering students were compared to billiard balls placed at the high end of the table. As they rolled down toward graduation, creative and independent persons dropped out of the side pockets. (Later on, when they were powerful and wealthy, the college honored them as distinguished alumni.)[12]

Chickering's analysis is supported by the evidence that creative students find limited opportunity to develop their strength in the Christian college. Evidently, we are more comfortable with empiricism than with intuition as a way of discovering truth. Yet, intuition is a higher level of mind than intellect because it springs from consciousness itself. One would expect that intuition and its expression in the

12. Arthur W. Chickering, "The Best Colleges Have the Least Effect," *Saturday Review*, vol. 54, January 16, 1971.

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humanities would be a natural strength of the Christian college. Perhaps if it were, the spreading claims of empiricism would be checked and revelation itself would be more meaningful. A Christian teacher with an eternal perspective should set free the potential of all levels of the mind—reflective as well as analytical, universal as well as mutual, and subconscious as well as self-transcendent—on the learning process.

VIII

Redemptive Accountability

Because freedom involves responsibility, a Christian teacher submits his teaching to *redemptive accountability*. Freedom from accountability is one of the sacred cows that has been slain by public demands upon higher education. While the professor's classroom is still sacrosanct, his product is not. Performance goals and behavioral objectives are being pressed upward from the lower schools upon colleges and universities. No longer can a professor avoid an appraisal of his teaching by saying that quality cannot be measured. Students, parents, administrators and legislators are calling for results that can be tested by scores, skills, attitudes and values.

Christian teachers should join the rebellion against a "result-by-numbers" system in higher education. It is another symptom of empiricism's attempt to "objectify" learning. Little or no room is left for intuition and revelation which cannot be measured by an empirical yardstick. Christian members of the academic community must rally to keep the balance between the immediate outcomes of learning that can be measured and the developing qualities which give learning its ultimate meaning.

Accountability, with an emphasis upon numbers, has moved into the vacuum left when scholars denied their responsibility to God as the source of truth. No prophetic insight was needed to predict that a scholar who was responsible only to his peers or to his culture, as pronounced by the Harvard report, would soon be responsible to no one. Now, we're

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trying to live with the seven devils of empirical accountability which leave little room for the personal and intangible results of learning.

A Christian teacher must not only react against the quantitative trend toward accountability, but also accept the responsibility to be accountable to the standards of God's judgment. According to the New Testament, the works of man will be judged by the extent to which they contribute to redemption. Whether it is a cup of cold water, a mission of mercy, or a ministry of the church, our ultimate purpose must be the redemption of a person, a nation, and a world.

For a Christian teacher, a redemptive purpose does not mean evangelistic techniques and soul-saving head counts. He or she must, however, accept three redemptive responsibilities. *First*, a Christian teacher must be responsible for the redemptive development of certain students. To assume that a Christian teacher would spend a lifetime teaching thousands of students and never be at the turning point in someone's life is inconceivable. Sooner or later, a supernatural orientation will produce an encounter and an incarnational concern will produce a response. At that point, a Christian teacher stands accountable. *Second*, a Christian teacher must be responsible for creating a redemptive climate in the classroom and on the campus. Essentially, this is a "change and growth" climate where faculty and students have an opportunity to move toward their potential as scholars, persons and Christians. *Third*, a Christian teacher must have a long-range responsibility for the redemptive impact of the Christian college on society. J. Edwin Orr, in his dissertation on evangelism in Christian higher education, shows that the revival movements which led to social reform at the close of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began on the Christian college campus.[13] It is not too much to expect that the Christian colleges in the latter part of the twentieth century will also have a redemptive responsibility for a society that cries out for reform. Earlier, it was noted that the final re-

13. C. Robert Pace, *Education and Evangelism: A Profile of Protestant Colleges*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974).

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port of the Carnegie Commission predicted that society still looks to higher education for social reform. But no one can agree on the means to be used or the end to be accomplished. Perhaps spiritual renewal on the Christian college campus will again be the means, and social reform according to the principles of Jesus Christ will again be the end. If so, Christian teachers are responsible for seeing their scholarly pursuits within that redemptive hope. Certainly, their efforts will be ultimately reviewed in the light of God's redemptive purpose in the world.

Revelational integration, creational inquiry, divine vocation, sacramental meaning, doctrinal authority, incarnational concern, eternal perspective, redemptive accountability — it may appear as if the responsibilities of a Christian teacher are beyond the power of ordinary men. So they are. A Christian teacher is obligated to equal and exceed the highest expectations of his profession. Without grace, failure is inevitable. With grace, a redemptive purpose begins to unfold through teaching. Students change and grow. Secular scholars are challenged. Christian colleges produce agents of reform. All of this is possible when teaching takes on the "transcendental touch of immortality."

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Scholarship and the Rule of Christian Faith

David L. McKenna

"What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" After nineteen centuries of dialogue, collision, and détente, Tertullian's ancient question still hangs heavy in the contemporary air.

A Shifting Initiative

Early Christian fathers answered this question with the confidence that Jerusalem — the realm of the spirit — was called to challenge Athens—the realm of the mind. Clement and Origen founded the Catechetical School at Alexandria as a center for inquiry and research. Students were introduced to the encyclopedia of ancient knowledge and advanced to philosophical learning in order to arrive at the capstone of their education — Christian theology and Biblical exegesis. With superior learning and revealed authority, Christian scholars successfully called pagan philosophers into accountability at the bar of both reason and revelation.

Internal conflicts in the community of faith blunted that witness. Origen's scholars became more philosophical and mystical under the influence of Hellenism. Augustine reacted against this syncretism with his formula *credo ut intelligam* —faith precedes knowledge. In making his point, however, he split Athens and Jerusalem by declaring, "God and the soul, that is what I desire to know. Nothing more? Nothing whatever."[1] Acquinas, then, brought natural reason back into the debate as he adopted Aristotle's theorem that "Reason is the preamble to revelation." With revelation as an additive rather than a corrective for reason, faith itself went on the defensive. Although medieval universities prospered

1. Bernard Ramm, *The Christian College in the Twentieth Century*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963), pp. 15-30.

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in an Age of Belief, the realm of the spirit became so logically precise that it lost its potency for challenging reason itself.

Even the humanizing influences of the Renaissance and the Reformation could not rescue Christian scholarship from its own paralysis. Consequently, when the Age of Reason made its move against the Age of Belief, the rationalism of Athens won the day and produced the modern university. Jerusalem was now in retreat. Secular scholars challenged Christian philosophies and declared that faith was obsolete. Reputable scholarship was limited to the natural world, the empirical method, the neutral mind, the quantifiable result, and the perfectible man. On the continent, Christian scholars retreated to the conclaves of theology departments in public universities or sought an intellectual armistice with the new rationalism. In the United States, colleges and universities were founded as professional schools and protective agencies for the church, but not as intellectual centers for Christian scholarship to contest the rising rationalism of the 18th and 19th centuries. By 1870 the secular university in America was a model of its German counterpart and the spirit of reason dominated its life. Christian colleges and universities sold their birthright for a mess of prestige, and public institutions were founded without the theology departments of their European models. For the past century, then, Athens has snubbed its nose at Jerusalem in America. Christian scholars have tended to solicit the favor of secular scholars rather than challenge their assumptions. Likewise, Christian colleges and universities have tended to stress their size and spirit rather than risk intellectual confrontation. In a vicious cycle of solicitation and seduction, American higher education demonstrates the reversal of roles between Athens and Jerusalem. Athens bowed before Jerusalm. Now, Jerusalem has bowed before Athens.

Still, Athens is not without its challenge. Today, we are seeing social change succeed where Christian scholarship has failed. In the short stroke of one decade, public confidence in higher education has shifted from a Messianic hope to a shattered betrayal. Students have led a revolt against the

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splendid isolation of the scholarly mind. The mass media have brought all of the senses back into the learning process. Technology has moved so fast that man cannot trace the line from cause to effect, anticipate the ethical conflicts that arise, or be assured of his personhood in the process.

Education is the religion of a secular society, and the public still looks to the schools for some answers. Yet, none of these current issues can be resolved in the narrow name of reason. Perhaps that is why Clark Kerr's review of books on higher education since 1970 reads like a compendium of doomsday writings. "Crisis," "decline," "failure," "revolt," and "conflict" were the key words in the titles of the best sellers during the past three years.

More objectively, one can point to Brubacher's lectures on the *Identity Crisis in the University*. He notes the confrontation between the Age of Belief and the Age of Reason which marked the transition from the medieval to the modern university. But now, he sees the Age of Reason being challenged by the Age of Feeling in what may be the transition from the modern to the post-modern university. Not only that, but there is evidence that students are resurrecting the Age of Belief as an essential part of their intellectual quest.[2] Without glee, we will watch the scholars of reason in the modern university twist and squirm under the challenge of change for years to come.

In the final report of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, the issue comes into clearest focus. Five basic purposes were sorted out to describe the mission of American higher education. *First* in the order of priority and of rising importance is the purpose to "develop the total student" — not only his intellect, but his emotions, values and ethics as well. *Second* is the continuing goal to raise the general quality of American life through professional and vocational training. *Third*, higher education is committed to

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2. John S. Brubacher, *The University . . . Its Identity Crisis*, First Herbert Welte Lectures, Central Connecticut State College, 1972.

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social justice through educational opportunity for the disadvantaged. *Fourth*, the traditional responsibility for the transmission and advancement of knowledge still remains. *Fifth*, and finally, colleges and universities are expected to be agents for the reform of society even though the ground rules and the ideals for change are still unknown.[3]

Modern universities and empirical scholarship have accomplished Herculean feats in research, teaching and professional training. A measure of educational justice has been achieved. But when the performance of American higher education is judged against the expectations for the total development of the student and the values for social reform, it is weighed in the balances and found wanting.

In sum, then, Athens is again moving to the defensive. Empirical scholarship is like the mouse that labored and brought forth a mountain. Along with its benefits, it has bred personal, social and moral issues which it cannot resolve. As Nels Ferré wrote, "Higher education floats rudderless on the changing tides of force."

Looked at another way, the time has come for Christian scholars to recapture the initiative by challenging secular philosophies on their own ground of critical thinking about the nature of truth and its pursuit. If we do, we will find that there are *common* assumptions upon which Christian and secular scholars depend. We need to recall, however, that these assumptions are essentially Biblical in nature. Then when we review the *conflicting* assumptions that separate Christian and secular scholarship, we will find Biblical authority for a critique of secular scholarship as well as a remedy for its ills. From this perspective will come the evidence and the confidence that Christian scholarship must return to the front line of our witness in the world.

Before turning to a review of the common and conflicting

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3. *Priorities for Action*, Final report of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973).

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assumptions of Christian and secular scholarship, let me anticipate two questions. One is the question about Biblical authority. Obviously, most secular scholars would not accept that authority. My position, however, is that secular scholars should be called to recognize some of the forgotten roots of their heritage and also to acknowledge Biblical authority as one of the sources that provides support for scholarship. The second question relates to the implication that empirical scholarship may be Christian scholarship "come of age" if its roots are Biblical. There is a sense in which empiricism represents a maturity of intellectual search. If, however, it is isolated from its roots or arrogant in its claims, it is regressive rather than mature and potentially evil rather than good. Christian scholarship has had its own day of dogmatism, so the warning of history applies to all of us.

Common Assumptions of Scholarship

Scholarship has axioms that apply to the intellectual task without regard for methods or philosophical commitments. George Buttrick, in his book, *Biblical Thought and the Secular University*, notes, however, that these axioms are essentially Biblical in origin. Other religions or philosophies do not provide the same working assumptions for scholarship that we find in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Generally speaking, these assumptions are not debated among scholars. In application, however, they will reflect differences in philosophical commitments.[4]

First, it is assumed that *truth is a unity*. At its root, "universe" means "one song." In its extended meaning, "university" retains the oneness and the wholeness of the universe in truth as well as in community. Other religions divide truth into segments—some of which are beyond the scope of scholarship. But the Biblical statement, "Our Lord is One Lord," confirms the oneness of Reality and the wholeness of Truth. Science is dependent upon the oneness of truth for its method and its findings. Secular scholarship, however,

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4. George A. Buttrick, *Biblical Thought and the Secular University*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1960), pp. 1-2.

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has failed to recognize this element of faith as the first principle for its framework. While assuming the unity of truth, it has failed to define its nature. Consequently, there has been a tendency to raise the empirical method to the level of truth itself. Another symptom of its failure is overspecialization in which the parts of knowledge are treated like truth itself rather than in relationship to other disciplines and to a larger reality.

Christian scholars have been guilty of an opposite error. With the easy confidence that God is truth, we have often failed to pursue the particulars of knowledge with the rigor of the secularists. When we have, we have then usually failed to take the leadership in relating the particulars of knowledge to the oneness of truth as a continuing obligation of the scholarly enterprise. Therefore, the first challenge of Christian scholarship should be to remind our secular colleagues of our common faith in the unity of truth.

Second, we share the assumption that *truth can be known* and that *man has the will to know*. Universities are founded upon the premise that truth can be known through systematic search. Balancing that premise is man's insatiable quest for knowledge. As Karl Jaspers has said,

> Modern man remains intensely alive to the ancient wisdom that nothing except the discovery of truth gives meaning to our lives, that nothing is exempt from our desire for knowledge, and that, above all, life seeks to base itself upon thought.[5]

The "ancient wisdom" of which Jaspers speaks is Biblically based. After God had revealed the oneness and the wholeness of reality through the creation, He told man to "name the animals." This was not just a word game to sort out the species. God opened up the universe to man's will to

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5. Karl Jaspers, *The Idea of the University*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 16.

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know and invited him to learn the secrets and share the power of His creation.

Scholarship, whether secular or Christian, depends upon the assumptions of an open universe and a man's will to know. Secular scholarship accepts the assumptions without acknowledging their origin. Yet, neither secularism nor any other philosophy of nature and man provides such strong support for scholarship as the Scriptures. Christian scholars should not only challenge the roots of secular science, but take new confidence in God's personal invitation to join the intellectual quest.

Third, Christian and secular scholars mutually support the assumption that *matter is worthy of study*. Buttrick notes that when the Bible states that " . . . the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," this was a new approach to matter in the ancient world. Other philosophies were baffled by the nature of matter. Platonists had made it a prison or fetter upon the spirit of man. Gnostics had denied its existence.[6] Imagine, then, the revolutionary nature of a system of thought that placed value on matter itself. Modern science could not exist without this assumption. Yet again, while accepting the benefits of Biblical thought, the basic truth is either denied or forgotten. Christian scholarship must declare the value of matter for the purpose of study — not as evil, neutral or illusory, but as an invaluable part of the oneness and the wholeness of the universe.

Fourth, all scholarship rests upon the assumption that *time is a straight line of purposeful change*. Buttrick notes that time was a treadmill in the history of man until the Scriptures introduced the purpose of God into the destiny of man. The circle of time was straightened out and pointed toward a meaningful future.[7] Science counts upon time as a straight line rather than a circle to validate its method. Longitudinal studies are based upon the assumption that time

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6. Buttrick, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

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will permit the movement from hypothesis to testing to tentative conclusion. Again, science believes in purposeful change without recognizing its Biblical basis. Christian scholars should be declaring the preacher's words, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

When scholarship is viewed within the perspective of these common assumptions, it is obvious that both Christian and secular scholars exercise a measure of faith in their quest. The difference, however, is that secular scholars do not adequately acknowledge that element of faith and its Biblical basis. Christian scholars need to challenge the assumptions of the secularists by developing the potential for inquiry, research, and dialogue when the Biblical assumptions are acknowledged. Scholarship takes on a totally new meaning in a universe where truth has oneness, nature is open, man is questing, and time has a purpose. Secular scholars have a method, but Christian scholars have the roots.

Conflicting Assumptions of Christian and Secular Scholarship

Conflicts between Christian and secular scholars are not limited to the application of common assumptions about scholarship. Direct confrontations arise concerning the nature of *truth*, the nature of *man*, the nature of *mind*, and the nature of *freedom*. At each of these points, battle lines have been drawn from which there is no retreat without full surrender.

While Christian and secular scholars share the assumption that truth has unity, they are torn apart by disagreements over the *dimensions of truth*. Simplistically, Christians recognize the dimensions of the natural and the supernatural in the pursuit of truth. Discursive truth is discovered by logic, empirical science and intuition in the natural world. Revealed truth, however, is knowledge of the supernatural that is given to man rather than discovered by him. Christians take revealed truth one step farther as they claim spe-

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cial revelation of the supernatural through the life of Christ and the Word of God.

Secularists have drawn limits around truth by contending that revealed truth is not a legitimate concern of scholarship because it is not amenable to scientific verification. William Pollard, the nuclear physicist, compares this viewpoint to the fable of the *Flatland*, a book by Edwin Abbott, a mathematician. The "Flatland" is a two-dimensional universe in which the inhabitants cannot see in depth. For them, the third dimension is the realm of the supernatural. A sphere can enter or leave Flatland by simply moving perpendicular to the plane of the Flatland universe. To the two-dimensional viewers, the sphere is just a circle. Everything else is supernatural.

Abbott uses this fable to illustrate the fact that our three-dimensional view of space may not be the sum total of existence. The supernatural may not be seen or tested, but it exists as a separate reality with only its intimations in the natural world.

Empirical science is a Flatland unless other dimensions of nature are admitted as legitimate spheres for scholarship. When William Pollard became a Christian, he wrestled with the conflict of science and technology until he realized that his "secret imaginative framework" was too restrictive. He recovered what he calls "his lost capacity to respond to reality transcendent to space, time and matter." When he recovered this capacity, he said that both theology and science had full range and scope in his outlook. Without losing his scientific credentials, he found that the character of supernatural reality became both "exciting and relevant."[8]

The nature of man will also divide Christian and secular scholars. A solid line of separation can be drawn between those scholars who believe that man is a self-ascending crea-

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8. William Pollard, "Natural Order and Transcendent Order," *Colleges and Commitments*, Lloyd J. Averill and William W. Jellema, eds., (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), p. 111.

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ture and those who believe that he needs to be redeemed. "Man as the measure of all things" was only a theoretical construct for me until I was shocked by an accolade that was given at the retirement of a great university president whom I admired. He was a scholar and a statesman with few peers in the university world. At the farewell in his honor, the last speaker said that he was a great educator because he never wavered in his conviction that "man was perfectible through education." This is a doctrine that should have been resolved at Auschwitz, exploded at Hiroshima and scorched at Hué. But it still undergirds the evolutionary and progressive hope of rationalistic, humanistic and empirical scholarship in the modern university.

A Biblical view of man is not so naive. While protecting the integrity and the individuality of man by declaring him the "subject" rather than the "object" of inquiry, he is still a sinner capable of monstrous deeds in the name of reason as well as religion. Supernatural power is needed for his redemption. But when he is transformed, his potential for scholarship is dramatically enhanced. Huston Smith notes that the more faith a man has, the more open-minded he is because of his confidence in the truth. To avoid intellectual arrogance, however, his confidence must be matched by his self-confessed fallibility. According to Smith, "fallibilism" is "the vivid awareness of the mind's limitations, the high sense of the finitude of every human perspective." At first it would appear as if "fallibilism" would undermine our confidence in the truth. It need not. Fallibilism recognizes that our grasp of truth may be wrong or incomplete. While we do not have to assume that our basic beliefs are subject to error (except as we interpret them), we must admit that our knowledge of truth is incomplete. Smith puts it right when he says, "Fallibilism is a creed for adventurers."[9] Christian scholars who believe in a Biblical view of man will be able to claim confidence in truth as "open selves" and still confess the "fallibilism" or the incompleteness of the human perspective.

9. Huston Smith, "Objectivity vs. Commitment," *Colleges and Commitments*, Lloyd J. Averill and William W. Jellema, eds., (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), pp. 48-49.

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A further conflict is created between Christian and secular scholars over the *nature of mind*. Through a process of subtraction, secular scholarship has isolated the mind as the most objective source and reason as the purest process for the discovery of truth. Three things are wrong with this doctrine. One is that the totality of persons cannot be neglected in the scholarly process. The second is that the mind is capable of erosion, prejudice, evil and death as well as the body. Third, there are levels of the mind that must be recognized. Buttrick identified the levels of the: (1) logical mind; (2) contemplative mind; (3) universalizing mind; (4) mutual mind; (5) subsconscious mind; and (6) self-transcendent mind. "Pure reason" tends to be limited to the level of the logical or scientific mind. The rich resources of the other levels, particularly the self-transcendent mind, are lost by such an exclusive point of view.

From a Biblical perspective, the mind needs to be redeemed as well as the body. Although Freud was not a believer, he said "the mind itself can make the worse appear the better reason." That is why Christian theology stresses the "renewing of your mind" as a cardinal doctrine of redemption. Certainly, it should be presumed that all of the levels of the mind are candidates for renewal so that Christian scholarship should be rich in scope as well as honest in search.

All other conflicts between Christian and secular scholars finally meet in a violent confrontation over the *nature of freedom*. The issue was clearly drawn when the Harvard Report on *General Education in a Free Society* concluded that the secular scholar is ultimately judged "by the only standards by which he can be judged, namely, the traditions of his nation and his culture." No provision is made for a standard of truth outside of man himself. Secular scholars have choked on the Harvard Report many times during the past few years as the standards of significance in the nation and the culture seem to have come loose from their moorings.

Academic freedom is the issue at stake. Under the guise of objectivity, secular scholars have plead neutrality on the

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moral implications of their research until an idea crosses with their own prejudice. Then, academic freedom is temporarily "inoperative" while the victim is intellectually quartered and drawn. This happened just recently in the case of Professor Jensen and his colleagues. When they were invited to report their research findings on the relationship between race and intelligence, they were jeered and mauled because their tentative conclusion was that blacks were genetically inferior. Such an event lends new credibility to the quality of academic freedom in Christian colleges where the quest for truth goes on at least without "hidden prejudice."

Freedom for Christian scholars has a point of responsibility outside themselves. In Paul Tillich's description of Christian revelation, he points out the qualities of mystery, miracle and ecstasy. Revelation is the unveiling of a mystery, the miracle of a happening, and the ecstasy of mingled grace and judgment.[10] Like new scientific findings, revelation requires an adjustment in our thinking and doing. Ecstasy is that particular quality of revelation that causes us to stand outside ourselves and reappraise our life. Revelation, then, becomes one of a Christian scholar's behavioral objectives against which he must judge his performance. His motivation for scholarship, his method of inquiry, and his conclusions must be ultimately tested against the authority of the Word of God and the example of the life of Jesus Christ. He does not have the false security of a perpetually suspended judgment or the escape hatch of moral relativism. As Jacques Ellul has noted, "all of the works of man are subject to the judgment and the wrath of God."[11] Yet, Christian revelation includes grace as well as judgment. Therefore, a Christian scholar is relieved of intellectual fads and vacillating peer pressures which restrict the freedom of the secularist. While not ignoring new knowledge or the standards of his colleagues, he is free to submit his work to the higher court of revelation where judgment is consistent, and grace is freely given.

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10. Buttrick, *op. cit.*, p. 41ff.

11. Jacques Ellul, *The Meaning of the City*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), p. 44ff.

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An uneven outline of some of the common and conflicting assumptions of Christian and secular scholarship leads us to make these observations about scholarship and the rule of faith.

1. Because truth is one and whole in God, a Christian scholar will always view his work in a relational and reverent context.

2. Because truth can be known and God has given man an open invitation to search for truth, a Christian scholar will be motivated to join the intellectual quest as a divine vocation.

3. Because matter is worth studying, a Christian scholar will be an active participant in the search for knowledge in the natural world.

4. Because time has a purpose, a Christian scholar will approach his task with a meaningful and hopeful sense of destiny.

5. Because truth has more than one dimension, a Christian scholar will recognize both the discursive truth of the natural world and the revealed truth of the supernatural world.

6. Because man is not automatically self-ascending, a Christian scholar will acknowledge the need for man's redemption as a part of the learning process.

7. Because mind is not intrinsically pure and reason is not the only level of mind, a Christian scholar will understand the need for the renewing of the mind in order to release the richness of all the levels of knowing.

8. Because freedom is neither totally objective nor neutral, a Christian scholar will recognize his ultimate responsibility to the authority of revelation, its grace as well as its judgment.

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Tertullian's question is now reversed, "What indeed has Jerusalem to say to Athens?" Jerusalem should become a prophetic voice in the academic wilderness pointing out the two transgressions of Athens. One is the sin of Baalism: raising a means, such as the intellectual quest or the scientific method, to the level of an end in itself. The other sin is Titanism: raising man to the level of God Himself. At the same time, we who have tried to stand astride the two worlds of Jerusalem and Athens must confess the sin of dogmatism: imposing truth as a closed system upon the scholarly process. Also, we have been guilty of the sin of Timidity: cowering under the fear of losing academic respectability if we challenge secular scholarship.

It is time for Jerusalem to lead us out of the tangled jungle into which Athens has led us. It is time for Christian scholars to bring a new dimension of reality to the Flatland of the Grecian Gods.